UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Anthropology of Aesthetics

2122-1-F0101R007

Course title

Art, collecting practices, and aesthetics of everyday life

Topics and course structure

The course examines the methods and issues of aesthetic anthropology and anthropology of art with particular reference to (1) the cultural dimension of sensory experience in traditional societies; the aestheticization of life related to creative and cultural economy in the contemporary societies; (2) the contemporary art world; interactions between ethnographic and artistic practices in public art projects (3) museums, collecting practices, and cultural heritage with particular reference to African material culture and arts.

Attending students will have the opportunity to meet artists, curators and museums conservators.

Objectives

Knowledge and
understanding:

knowing

the current topics and problems of anthropology of art and aesthetics.

Applied knowledge and understanding:

seizing how aesthetic and sensory dimensions shape the different fields of the experience, and the different areas of the anthropological knowledge.

Communication skills and making judgements will be increased through problem solving strategies, and collective discussions about theoretical and practical issues, requiring the students to take a stand.

Methodologies

Lectures, powerpoint, video and conversation with artists, curators, and museums conservators.

Online and offline teaching materials

Slides.

Programme and references for attending students

Students will select one of the following three options:

1) Sensory Anthropology

Bargna I., 2014 "Filming Food Cultural Practices in Cameroon. An Artistic and Ethnographic Work", *Archivio di Etnografia*, 1-2, pp. 111-133 (http://www.anuac.it/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Archivio-di-Etnografia_1-2_2014_indiceabstracts.pdf)

Csordas T., 1993, “Somatic Modes of Attention”, in *Cultural Anthropology*, 8, 2: 135-156

Ingold T., “The Temporality of Landscape”, *World Archeology*, 25, 1993: 152-174 (https://quote.ucsd.edu/sed/files/2014/09/Ingold-Temporality-of-the-Landscape.pdf)

Pink S., 2014, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, Sage Publ, London, 164 pages

Ingold T, 2013, *Making. Anthropology, Archeology, Art, and Architecture*, Routledge, London

2) Anthropology of Contemporary Art

Bargna I., 2012, “Between Hollywood and Bandjoun: art activism and anthropological ethnography into the mediascape *“, Journal des anthropo*logues, 129-130: 101-130

Grimshaw A., Ravetz A., 2005, “The ethnographic turn and after: a critical approach towards the realignment of art and anthropology”, *Social Anthropology,* 23, 4: 418- 434

Plattner S., 1998, “A Most Ingenious Paradox: The Market for Contemporary Fine Art”, *American Anthropologist,* 100, 2: 482-493

Schneider A., Wright C., eds., 2010*, Between Art and Anthropology. Contemporary Ethnographic Practice*, Berg, Oxford and New York, 264 pages

3) Museum Anthropology and Cultural Heritage

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett B., 2006, “Heritage and Cultural Economics”, in I. Karp, C. Kraz*, Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, Duke University Press, London (https://www.nyu.edu/classes/bkg/web/heritage.pdf)

Karp I., Lavine S., 1991, *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Smithsonian, 480 pages

Sansi R., a cura, 2020, *The Anthropologist as Curator*, Bloomsbury, pp. 256

Programme and references for non-attending students

The bibliography is same of attending students.

Non-attending students are invited to contact the teacher in order to prepare properly their exam.

Assessment methods

Oral exam: questions will assess students’ knowledge of the texts and, for attending students only, the topics discussed in class; questions will also assess students’ ability to establish connections between different theories, topics, and case studies.

Office hours

By appointement.

Programme validity

Two years.

Course tutors and assistants

Dr. Alessandra Turchetti